

Undergraduate Newsletter
Department of Biology
January 2026 Issue



Welcome back and all the best for 2026! We trust that you are recharged and ready for new endeavors.

This January issue starts off the winter term with important reminders and career-building opportunities. There will be more in the coming months, so keep this newsletter in mind. As always, we are here to help, so please let us know.

Don't forget... January 16, 2026 is the last date to add a winter term course and the last date to drop Winter Term classes with full tuition credit, the complete list of important dates can be found @ <https://www.queensu.ca/academic-calendar/arts-science/academic-calendar/>

Are you planning to graduate in spring 2026?

Don't forget to check your degree plan status and add courses if needed. You also need to be aware of the GPA requirements for graduation, please see Academic Regulation 16: Requirements for Graduation (<https://www.queensu.ca/academic-calendar/arts-science/academic-regulations/>)

Important dates to remember...

- ✓ **Majors Night** is Thursday, March 12, 2026, from 3:30-7:00pm in Grant Hall
- ✓ **BIPS Information Session** TBD

BIOL 404 - Summer 2026

BIOL 404: May 4th to May 15th (last date to add/drop the course is May 5th at mid-night)

Course details can be found @ <https://130.15.90.125/BioLab/biol404.html>

BIOL 404: Techniques in Molecular Biology (Units: 3.00)

Intensive laboratory work (8h/day) to be carried out over two and a half weeks in May. Practical work includes DNA isolations, DNA cloning, PCR, production of proteins, biochemical and immunological analysis of proteins.

BIOL 418 - Summer 2026

BIOL 418: May 4th to May 15th (last date to add/drop the course is May 5th at mid-night)

BIOL 418: Fisheries Techniques (Units: 3.00)

This course will introduce students to many "hands-on" techniques currently used in fisheries. This will include fish identification, different capture techniques for fisheries assessment, bioacoustics, environmental monitoring, techniques for ageing fish, diet analysis, fish tracking (biotelemetry approaches), and data management.

NOTE: *The Biology Department will be accepting one combined application for both the USRA and USSRF awards. Eligible students will be considered for either program.*

Undergraduate Summer Research Awards (USRA) Canada's Natural Science and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) underwrites these **prestigious awards** to nurture interest and further develop potential for research and discovery. USRAs provide salary support to gain research work experience. The award is supplemented by the supervisor to match or exceed other positions, such as SWEP. The duration of the award is for 16 weeks during the summer. Students will be paid a minimum of \$17.60 per hour x 35 hours x 16 weeks, for a total of \$11,675. There is no restriction on who can supervise a USRA student, provided the faculty member is affiliated with the Biology Department, and the university deems them eligible to supervise students and they can support their portion of the student award. Application and awarding of USRAs is through Queen's Biology, with an application deadline of January 16, 2026, for summer awards. The 2026 application and instructions are <https://biology.queensu.ca/current-students/undergraduate-students/awards-and-opportunities>

Undergraduate Student Summer Research Fellowships (USSRF) Queen's University sponsors these awards to provide an experiential learning opportunity for undergraduate students at Queen's. The program is intended to provide students with meaningful opportunities to engage in discovery-based learning and to develop research skills. The award provided by Queen's is supplemented by additional funds from the supervisor to match or exceed other positions, such as SWEP. The duration of the award is for 16 weeks during the summer. Students will be paid a minimum of \$17.60 per hour x 35 hours x 16 weeks, for a total of \$11,675. There is no restriction on who can supervise a USRA student, provided the faculty member is affiliated with the Biology Department, and the university deems them eligible to supervise students and they can support their portion of the student award. Application and awarding of USSRF's is through Queen's Biology, with an application deadline of January 16, 2026, for summer awards. The 2026 application and instructions are <https://biology.queensu.ca/current-students/undergraduate-students/awards-and-opportunities>

Gray Family Student Initiative Fund - call for applications 2026

The Gray Family Student Initiative Fund (GFSIF) was established through a gift to Queen's University by Gordon Gray, BCom'50 in January 2004. This fund was established to "provide annual support to any Arts and Science student, or group of students, who would like to write a report, attend a conference, do non-profit work, or other initiatives in the area of preservation of wildlife species.". The grant guidelines stipulate that "Grants are meant to enable students to participate in non-credit opportunities that will provide them with meaningful lessons realized by working with others in helping conserve wildlife."

In the upcoming fiscal year (May 2026 to April 2027) we invite undergraduate students to apply to the GFSIF by submitting an application (up to two pages) with the following information: i) a description of their initiative; ii) how their initiative speaks to the intent of the grant; and iii) a budget outlining the amount requested. An awards committee, with representation from at least three departments/schools within the Faculty of Arts and Science, will rank the proposals and suggest fund allocations, which will then be forwarded to the Dean of Arts and Science for approval. Once approved by the Dean, the successful applicants will be notified in early-to-mid March.

Please submit complete applications as a single PDF file to Brian Cumming, Department Head - Biology (cummingb@queensu.ca) by **February 15, 2026**.

Undergraduate Research Opportunities - Research Mentorship 538/539/540

Biology 538 (3.0 unit), 539 (3.0 unit) and 540 (6.0 units [a full-year two-term research mentorship]) offer individual students the opportunity to undertake a laboratory research practicum under the supervision of a biology faculty member. In addition to volunteer work in the host lab, students will normally attend BIOL537 seminars (Fall and/or Winter) and conduct research to present both as a major paper and seminar. <https://biology.queensu.ca/current-students/undergraduate-students/courses/research-mentorship>

ASURF - The Arts & Science Undergraduate Research Fund

Arts and Science Research Fund (ASURF) was implemented to foster a community amongst undergraduate scholars and promote a greater investment in undergraduate research. 2025-26 Applications will be open until January 16th, 2026, at 10:00pm (EST). [ASURF — ASUS \(queensasus.com\)](https://queensasus.com)

Queen's Work Study Program

The Work Study Program is offered jointly through Career Services and the Financial Aid and Awards Office and is funded by Queen's University. The objective of the Work Study Program is to provide an opportunity for students with financial need to receive priority for certain part-time jobs during their academic terms. [Queen's Work Study Program | Registrar & Financial Aid Services \(queensu.ca\)](https://queensu.ca/queens-work-study-program-registrar-financial-aid-services)

Internships (QUIP)

The Queen's Undergraduate Internship Program (QUIP) provides students with a 12–16-month internship experience. QUIP internships are paid, professionally supervised, career-related positions offering students the opportunity to learn about current practices, advances, and technologies in business / industry. <https://careers.queensu.ca/jobs-experience/internships-quip>

Queen's Summer Work Experience Program (SWEP) – Career Services

Since 1995, the Summer Work Experience Program (SWEP) has provided Queen's undergraduate students with an engaging, challenging, and rewarding summer work experience. The program encourages creation of on-campus summer jobs that provide valuable experiences for Queen's undergraduate students. <https://careers.queensu.ca/jobs-experience/summer-swap>

How many courses can count towards your degree plan from other Faculties?

A maximum of 6.00 units from courses offered by other Faculties and Schools may be counted toward the program and/or Plan requirements. This includes courses in BMED, COMM, GLPH, HSCI, LAW, NURS, and courses offered by Smith Engineering. <https://www.queensu.ca/academic-calendar/arts-science/courses-instruction-other-faculties-schools/>

What is the "APR"?

The APR is the Academic Progress Report. It is a handy tool that reviews your plan requirements, tracks progression, and it tells you what you have completed. To run an APR please visit: <https://www.queensu.ca/artsci/undergrad-students/academic-requirements-reports-in-solus>. Students are expected to run their APR both prior to and after registration. The APR will help flag potential concerns with respect to your registration and plan/program requirements.

Need help with your studies?

Please visit Student Academic Success Services (SASS) at <http://sass.queensu.ca/>. SASS offers academic support to students who wish to develop their skills in critical thinking, reading, learning, studying, writing and self management.

Looking for a job?

Wondering about career options or maybe considering Graduate School, then visit: <https://careers.queensu.ca/>

Looking for study and travel opportunities → <https://www.queensu.ca/ipo/>

REMINDERS!

Biology Degree Plans

Review your degree plan requirements and make sure you are selecting courses you need. Degree plan requirements can be found @ <https://www.queensu.ca/academic-calendar/arts-science/schools-departments-programs/biology/>

Biological Foundations List - IMPORTANT!

It is very important to keep this GPA requirement in mind throughout your program, starting with first year. To be admitted to 400 and 500 level Biology courses, you will need a minimum GPA of 2.0 in any previously taken courses from Biological Foundations list.

The Biological Foundations List is: BIOL 102, 103, 200, 205, 206, 212, 300, 330, 334, 339, & 341.

To be admitted to BIOL 400 and 500 level Biology courses you will need a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0 in any previously taken courses from this list.

Helpful Links:

<https://www.queensu.ca/artsci/events>

[Arts and Science Calendar](#)

<https://biology.queensu.ca/current-students/undergraduate-students/faq>

QUBS Quick Links

Website: <https://qubs.ca>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/QUBioStation>

Flickr: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/qubsoutreach>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/QUBScam>

BIOLOGY Undergraduate Office

Monday to Friday 9:30am – 12:00pm & 1:00pm – 3:00pm

Rm. 3109d, BIOSCI Complex

ug.biology@queensu.ca